



#5/A
cc
5-3/01
PATENTS

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

re application of

Ichiro HATANO et al.

Serial No. 09/244,019

GROUP 2186

Filed February 4, 1999

Examiner T. Thai

APPARATUS FOR AND METHOD OF
RETRIEVING INFORMATION

RECEIVED
MAY 30 2001
Technology Center 2100

AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents

Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Responsive to the Official Action of February 27, 2001,
please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Cancel claims 1-10.

Add the following new claims:

11. (new) An information retrieving apparatus for
retrieving target information from a plurality of candidates,
comprising:

Al storage means for storing the plurality of candidates
in a hierarchical structure including m hierarchies (m being a
natural number not less than 2);

output means for outputting a message which requests a
user to input a reply;

input means for a user to input the reply; and

searching means for searching candidates as to a
plurality of hierarchies in the hierarchical structure to